

PATTERNS OF
Global Terrorism

APRIL
2004



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

2003

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Background Information on Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations

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External Aid

Cuba provides some degree of safehaven, medical care, and political consultation. Reports persist that ELN members are often able to obtain safehaven inside Venezuelan territory near the Colombian border.

The Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)**Description**

Originated among militant Palestinians in the Gaza Strip during the 1970s. Committed to the creation of an Islamic Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel through holy war. Also opposes moderate Arab governments that it believes have been tainted by Western secularism. First designated in October 1997.

Activities

PIJ activists have conducted many attacks including large-scale suicide bombings against Israeli civilian and military targets. The group decreased its operational activity in 2003 but still claimed numerous attacks against Israeli interests. The group has not yet targeted US interests and continues to confine its attacks to Israelis inside Israel and the territories. US citizens have died in attacks mounted by the PIJ.

Strength

Unknown.

Location/Area of Operation

Primarily Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip. The group's leadership resides in Syria and Lebanon, as well as other parts of the Middle East.

External Aid

Receives financial assistance from Iran and limited logistic support assistance from Syria.

Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)**Description**

Broke away from the PFLP-GC in the late 1970's. Later, split again into pro-PLO, pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. Pro-PLO faction led by Muhammad Abbas (a.k.a. Abu Abbas) had been based in Baghdad. Abbas himself was detained by Coalition Forces in April 2003 and subsequently died in custody of natural causes in March 2004. First designated in October 1997.

Activities

The Abu Abbas-led faction is known for aerial attacks against Israel. Abbas's group also was responsible for the attack in 1985 on the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro and the murder of US citizen Leon Klinghoffer. Has become more active since the start of the al-Aqsa *intifadah*, and several PLF members have been arrested by Israeli authorities for planning attacks in Israel and the West Bank.

Strength

Unknown.

Location/Area of Operation

Based in Iraq since 1990 and has a presence in Lebanon and the West Bank.

External Aid

Had received support mainly from Iraq. Has received support from Libya in the past.

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**Description**

Marxist-Leninist group founded in 1967 by George Habash—as a member of the PLO—when it broke away from the Arab Nationalist Movement. The PFLP does